

KATIE PORTER
47TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
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JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

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January 19, 2023

Secretary Toks Omishakin
California State Transportation Agency
400 Capitol Mall, Suite 2340
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Freight Air Quality Solutions Project
CalSTA Port & Freight Infrastructure Program

Dear Secretary Omishakin,

I write in support of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) application for the CalSTA Port & Freight Infrastructure Program. The freight rail industry is essential to California's supply chain, and we should back efforts to decarbonize this sector.

As the freight industry begins its transition to zero-emission technologies, demonstration projects are needed to jumpstart new on-road and non-road vehicle propulsion. This project will send a strong signal to the freight industry by demonstrating the efficacy of a Hydrogen Fuel Cell Locomotive, operating in and around Southern California and directly supporting two of the largest ports in the United States.

This project will provide substantial benefits to Californians by reducing emissions, noise pollution, and electrical grid reliance. Hydrogen fuel cell power also has the potential to double the haulage capacity of the locomotive, which will increase port throughput. This demonstration project advances a cleaner rail network and will improve the air quality in the surrounding Los Angeles and Long Beach areas, inclusive of A.B. 1550 and S.B. 353 disadvantaged communities.

The SCAQMD Freight Air Quality Solutions project aligns with the President's greenhouse gas reduction goals, Congress' intent in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act, and California's State Rail Plan, which aims "to compete and thrive on the cutting edge of global technology, to lead the state's efforts to curb climate change, and to grow sustainably and resiliently in a fast-changing world."¹

¹ California State Rail Plan – Caltrans, Executive Summary, pg.2, <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/rail-mass-transportation/documents/rail-plan/0-executive-symmarycsrpfinal.pdf>

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I am confident this demonstration project will increase the efficiency of the global freight network and dramatically improve the region's air quality. I support this project and urge full and fair consideration.

Very truly yours,

Katie Porter
Member of Congress